

representing 29 States. In the Lincoln-Douglas debate there were 92 competitors representing 33 different colleges and universities.

Rebecca Makris, Derek Young, Jonathan Cross, and Tara McEriean represented the University of Rhode Island. During the six preliminary rounds the team defeated teams from Northeastern University, Simmons College, Oakland University, Colorado State University, Cornell University, Ohio University, Morgan State, and Central Michigan University.

Overall the winning record of the team placed them at 10th in the Nation and Rebecca Makris compiled an outstanding record, earning her a place as the 4th best debater in the competition.

Kristen Maar, director of the debate, states: "This is quite an accomplishment for the team and the University. The debaters that qualified for this national tournament were the best in the country, and to have Rebecca place fourth overall is a true achievement."

Coincidentally, the debate topic this year and the debate topic next year reflect some of my own interests in the Senate—the topics "United Nations" and "Education Reform."

This year's topic was "Resolved: That participation in one or more of the six principal bodies of the United Nations should be significantly restricted by altering the U.N. charter and/or rules of procedure."

The debate season will begin again in September, with the resolution dealing with education reform. The exact wording of the resolution will be released on August 1, 1996.

I want to commend the URI team for its excellent job and all the participants this year for their focus on the United Nations and key issues affecting our global future. I look forward to learning more about next year's debate. ●

#### ORDER OF BUSINESS

Mr. CRAIG addressed the Chair.  
The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Idaho is recognized.

#### THE WELL-BEING OF THE AMERICAN FAMILY

Mr. CRAIG. Mr. President, while our leaders are deciding the outcome of the evening and, more important, the outcome of a most important vote on the repeal of the gas tax, I guess I am surprised that the minority would not allow us to go forward to consider H.R. 2137.

We talk about the lack of security within the American family today, be it income security or job security. I know one thing that the American family is extremely concerned about, and that is the security and well-being of their own children. The House overwhelmingly has just voted on a law that will deal with the issue of sexual predators, Megan's law. I am amazed

that we could not move swiftly, as the House has moved, to deal with this issue. I hope that we can deal with it.

I hope that the minority will not block us from dealing with it in the future. Clearly, it is something that has to be dealt with. The American people need to know that when these kinds of problems arise, and there are glitches within the legal system that allow young people like Megan to be destroyed, their lives to be taken by people who clearly never should have been let out of incarceration, that this Congress will deal with it.

Mr. President, on Monday of this week, I was reading in USA Today an article by Tony Snowe, where he was talking about the concern and uneasiness of the American family, whether it is the issue of sexual predators, or the loss of a job, or working a multiple of jobs to get ahead, or whether it is the fact that in his article the American family was experiencing income stagnation.

I thought it was interesting when he pointed out that prior to President Clinton being elected, the average family was looking at about 31.3 percent of the gross national product of this country being taken away in taxes. Now, that is up 1½ to 2 percent in this administration. And one of the greatest bites out of that, which dragged down the ability of the family to use their income or to use their salary increases, was the gas tax increase.

In my State of Idaho, with 1.3 million people, it is a big bite. This gas tax hike that, for the first time in our Nation's history, goes to welfare programs instead of roads, bridges and transportation systems, costs \$32.1 million. And, boy, anybody who serves large rural States like mine knows that it strikes right at the heart of the productive sector of my State, whether it is the farmer, rancher, or the people who commute long distances, as nearly everybody in my State does, to the supermarket, to the business center, to visit, and to work. Those who are the working people of our society are the ones that are now paying even more.

I am amazed that our administration keeps talking about sticking it to the rich, soaking it to the rich. I am amazed they do not say, "And we soaked it to the worker, to the wage earner because we are sucking away from them at the gas pump an ever increasing amount of their income."

I also find it uniquely ironic that while taxes have ticked up aggressively in this administration from 30 percent of GDP to 31.3, that candidate Clinton in 1992 said he opposed increasing a gas tax, that he opposed increasing those kinds of taxes, he said they were regressive and unfair to working families, I am amazed that he somehow through what he may think is slight of hand or subterfuge created an omnibus tax bill and then, of course, says the way you pay them back is to force everybody to pay higher wages.

In my State of Idaho, that does not work because most of the people did

not get higher wages, and a minimum wage increase would affect few of these kinds of people who are our farmers and ranchers and small business people and commuters who travel hundreds of miles daily, not 20 or 30, not down the street in the commuter bus, not on the Metrorail, but 50 miles one way to work and 50 miles home at night. And when it starts costing \$20 or more, or \$25 to fill the gas tank a couple of times a week, that is one very large bite out of the pocketbook of the American family.

I am amazed that this administration would even begin to drag its feet on that kind of reality. And while this Congress should be holding oversight hearings on the ramp up in gas prices, we ought to be responding immediately in the areas that we can respond in, and that is in the area of bringing this tax down and doing it in a way that makes sense.

I respect highly the move that our majority leader has made. That is the kind of responsiveness and leadership that we ought to be hearing from this Congress, and now we are locked up again, blocked, if you will, by the minority because they want it their way when the American people are saying: Wait a moment. Your way was to increase our taxes. Your way was not to give us economic opportunity. Your way was to create through the 1993 tax act and the budget an economy that did not produce like it should, that could have produced billions of dollars more, that lost 1.2 million jobs it otherwise would have created if the tax act pushed by, endorsed by, recommended by President Clinton had not gone through.

Now, that is from 1993 to 1996 that I use that figure. Those are real figures just being brought out by the Heritage Foundation. Absent the tax increase in 1993, this economy would have created 1.2 million more jobs. Last month, we did not create a job. Something is wrong in an economy, a growth economy like ours when our President says that the economy is good and we create no jobs, zero jobs.

I am sorry; I do not figure it the way you figure it, Mr. President. I look at these kinds of figures and while they may be statistics, in my State of Idaho they are real jobs; they are food on the family table; they are a little more gas in the gas tank; they are a few more dollars in savings; it is the new house purchased or the clothes bought for the kids. That is what job creation and economic vitality is all about.

When I mentioned 1.2 million jobs lost, not created by the tax increase, when we carry that through next year, that will be an estimated 1.4 million jobs. That is 40,400 new business starts that did not start, that did not happen. Those are real figures in this country. Why? Because the risk of taking that opportunity just was not there, the money was not available because it was drained into the public sector to go out in ways that some of us would question